REMARKS

In an office action mailed October 7, 2009, the Examiner has imposed a restriction requirement under 35 U.S.C. §§ 121 and 372. According to the Examiner, the application contains the following groups of inventions:

Group I: claims 1-13 – drawn to a method;

Group II: claims 14 and 15 – drawn to a particulate material; and

Group III: claim 16 – drawn to an apparatus.

According to the Examiner, the special technical feature shared by the claims (particulate seed material) does not define a contribution over the prior art (U.S. Patent No. 4,429,535 to Featherstone) Therefore, the Examiner asserts that, under PCT Rule 13.2, the above groups of inventions do not relate to a single general inventive concept.

In response, Applicant has amended claim 1 to recite that the particulate seed material is heterogenous. In other words, the seed material is different from the material that crystallizes. Support for the amendment can be found, for example, on page 7, line 27 of the application.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that the special technical feature shared by the claims now defines a contribution over the prior art, and relates to a single general inventive concept.

Should the Examiner disagree with the above, Applicant elects the invention of Group I (claims 1-13) for further prosecution in this application, and withdraws claims 14-16.

Applicant reserves the right to re-introduce claims 14-16 when applicable, or pursue them in a continuation application at a later date.

It is now believed that the application is in condition for examination on the merits. If the Examiner has any additional issues he believes can be resolved over the telephone, he is invited to contact the undersigned at his convenience.

Respectfully submitted,

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